# UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE,

AND

# Complete Equality in Citizenship,

THE SAFEGUARDS OF

## DEMOCRATIC INSTITUTIONS:

SHOWN IN DISCOURSES BY

HENRY WARD BEECHER,

ANDREW JOHNSON, AND

WENDELL PHILLIPS.

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# UNIVERSAL SUFFRAGE:

AN ARGUMENT

## BY REV. HENRY WARD BEECHER,

*Delivered at Plymouth Church, Brooklyn, Sunday Evening, Feb.* 12, 1865.

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"Princes shall come out of Egypt; Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God."—PSALM lxiii. 34

No other people can trace back their history farther than the African; and in the periods before written history, they seem to have been in advance of other nations in civilization. No other people save the Jews ever suffered more dispersion throughout the globe, or a harder fate; and not even the Jews have borne their misfortunes with more endurance and more docility than they. There is a prophecy which, through the long night of ages, has beamed upon this darkness. That prophecy seems on the eve of fulfilment.

As we shall soon be called, as citizens, to determine the nation's policy respecting this people, we ought to seek knowledge betimes, that we may be prepared to perform as Christians should our civil duties.

It is true that the war is not yet over; but does any one longer doubt the issue? It is true that peace has not yet dawned; but, thanks to our President's integrity and sagacity, we have not been entrapped into a snare, and we are sure that when peace does come, it will stand on foundations of justice. It is true that all slaves are not free, but slavery is wounded unto death, beyond a doubt. With the purgation of the fundamental law of the land, is established liberty for every human being in this nation, save when forfeited by crime. And now the great question on every mind is, what shall be done with the blacks? To this I propose to devote the evening.

I begin by saying, that the difficulty in the case of the Anglo-African is not at all one of principle, or of policy, but almost wholly a practical trouble of working out in detail a very clear policy, and an unmistakable principle. This is a great fact, if it be true.

I may say, further, that the difficulty, such as it is, belongs, not to the blacks, but to the races that surround them. It is not inherent; it is extrinsic. In other words, our troubles are *white* troubles, and not *black* ones. Were this a fierce and turbulent people, like the tribes of Algeria; were they a race as unsusceptible of culture and amelioration as the North American Indians have proved to be, there would be less hopefulness in their case; but the Anglo-Africans are a kind, docile, civilizable stock, they are peculiarly susceptible to culture, and they are remarkably endowed with moral susceptibilities; so that, if ever again we are to have prophets and seers and rapt mystics, we shall find them of their blood.

Now that the multitude of lies are swept away which slavery wove as a blanket to cover its own abomination, we begin to see and to know more of the truth of this most interesting and most abused people.

Our first work is one of removing wrongs and disabilites. We are to recognize this people as a part of that human family for which Christ died. From the face of that truth will fly away all those guilty and hideous lies which have denied their humanity, and ranked them with beasts. They are *Men*. In that one word we have a solution for ten thousand troubles. We are in an age that believes in human nature. If unoppressed, if free, if incited to education and moral culture, we believe that human nature is competent to all its necessities, and to its destiny. And with the sentence, *They are men*, is cleared up a thousand sophisms and shameful excuses for wrong; and they are to have the benefit at once of those general truths respecting man which have been gradually evolved, and are in our hands as the legacy and history of all past generations. The faith which we have in human nature, and the zeal which the certainty that man, though poor, may be born of the Spirit and educated, enkindles, are for them. We have immeasurable confidence in

the common people, if only they are educated, and morally inspired, and left free, under our institutions. No one thinks of doubting the results when white men are brought under the Gospel. To all this comes now the black man. Once admit that he is a *man*, and then whatever you would think of the white man, think of him.

The whole question, then, is narrowed, and is a question, not of this race, but of general human nature. Whatever is true of *men*, is true of *black* men. There may be some specific differences between the blacks and the whites; but there are no more than exist between the various races of white men. It is our duty to have faith and courage for their future. To doubt their well being is to doubt the laws of God's moral government.

If I were to put into one single sentence a prescription for that people, it would be this: *Make them full American citizens.* Take away whatever hinders it, and add whatever is needful to it. Make them citizens, and *they* are safe, and *you* are safe.

To give this more in detail I would say, —

1. Give them land in fee simple, with ample protection in shape of a wise self-protecting economy. For it seems to have been a part of the divine purpose that land should be a means of education, and that the ownership of it should be indispensable to the production of the best forms of manhood.

2. Provide for them all those means of improvement which we so solicitously secure for our white population — schools, churches, books, and papers. We organize societies for our new States. We send home missionaries, schoolmasters, school-mistresses, and all the apparatus required for education, to our newer communities. We ask for the blacks no more than that: just that, and only that.

3. Open up for them a right to use their own faculties and their own skill in honest competition, in all trades and professions, with all comers, whoever they be; and then let them stand or fall by their own capacity to endure the ordeal. I do not propose to dandle the black man, or shield him in any kind of protection, just because he is black. I simply claim that you should give him the same chance that you give to anybody else. Take him as you take any man, making no distinction one way or the other; and then let him stand where he can place himself, neither putting him higher nor lower by privilege or preferment. Give him no prerogatives nor privileges; put upon him no disabilities nor hindrances. Place him on the broad ground on which we put other men as citizens.

4. Give to the blacks that right which belongs to every born creature — the right to take part in determining the laws, the magistracies, and the public policy under which they and their children are to live.

In short, I demand that the broad and radical democratic doctrine of the natural rights of men shall be applied to all men, without regard to race, or color, or condition. Let me see the Democrat that will face me and deny this doctrine! What is the reason that it should not be applied to every living creature, without regard to condition, race, or color? I demand faith in our own national principles, and courage to trust them in their practical application.

I shall be met, at once, with the honest, but mistaken declaration, that it is not safe to put the vote into the hands of the black man; that the elective franchise is too important to be committed to rude hands.

My reply is, that it has been committed to the hands of black men. They are voters in New York. They are voters in Massachusetts. They are voters in other States. They were voters in Virginia and Tennessee until within comparatively recent periods. And when has there ever been an allegation that they were unfaithful to their trust? that they were less than competent to hold it? There is abundant evidence to prove that they have shown themselves to be both faithful to it, and competent to hold it. It has never been dreamed that they were not.

And if it be said that the case is different when you sweep in vast masses of the uneducated black men of the South, I reply, that there may be special cases in which there will be mischief worked, but that the general result cannot but be true to this great democratic principle of the safety of putting trust in common men.

But I give a more general answer than this — for this is a prudential answer. The citizen's suffrage is not a privilege or a prerogative, but a right. Every man has a right to have a voice in the laws, the magistracies, and the policies that take care of him. That is an inherent right; it is not a privilege conferred. It is a part of liberty. It is a very precious part of citizenship, to which all men are entitled, except they forfeit it by crime; and when you say, "It is not safe to trust the vote in these men's hands," I reply that it is not for you to determine. It is a part of that which is their right; and they come to you, and say, "Why do you withhold from us that which God gave to us?"

On no ground, except that of crime, can you deny the elective franchise to any class, without admitting the monarchial doctrine, that civil rights and authority descend from the superior classes or rulers, and that they have a right to *confer*, as a privilege, that which the democratic doctrine teaches belongs to all men in common. Our doctrine is, that all rights and prerogatives belong to the whole people, and that they may be delegated by them to superior classes. The European doctrine is, that rights and prerogatives belong to the better classes, and that people may have them only as they are delegated to them by these classes. According to our doctrine, it is safe for rights and prerogatives to rest with the people. According to the European doctrine, it is not safe. In England, education is called free; but it is free only as a

charity or a dole is free. There are not in Great Britain what we understand by *common schools;* namely, schools provided by the common people for themselves, as a part of their rights; but the State may open schools without pay, as a mode of giving charity to their poor. Our doctrine is, that civil rights inhere in the people, and that, if they rise to the hands of superior classes, they are powers delegated to them, and that they evermore come back to the people. As the clouds draw their rain from the ocean, and, pouring it down upon the ground, return it to the ocean again, so authority goes from the common people to their rulers, and returns to the common people again. And the doctrine that the superior classes are exclusively fitted for holding powers and prerogatives, is a supreme arrogance. It is a part of the impertinence of aristocracy. When, therefore, any part of our people demand their rights as citizens, and we talk about the unsafety of giving these rights to them, we assume the positions and doctrines of monarchial governments and aristocratic classes.

A little more minutely, I would say, that an ignorant, and poor, and inexpert man has an inherent interest in his own affairs as much as though he were expert, and rich, and educated. The life of every man, no matter how poor or ignorant he may be, is as dear to him as yours is to you. The prosperity of his children is of as much importance to him as the prosperity of your children is to you. The laws which affect his peace, and comfort, and well-being are as much his concern as yours. And he has as much right to be consulted as to what shall be his fate as you have. And in ten thousand matters of common daily life, he is as apt to be right, and as surely right, as if he were a born philosopher.

I claim, again, that in a free republic, though it is manifestly dangerous to multiply ignorant voters, yet, it is far more dangerous to have a large under-class of ignorant and disfranchised men who are neither stimulated, educated, nor ennobled by the exercise of the vote. The best government, the wisest laws, the discreetest institutions, and the ablest administration of them, will not save us from perils. There is danger in every thing; and to have an ignorant class voting is dangerous, whether white or black; but to have an ignorant class, and not have them voting, is a great deal more dangerous. In other words, a great mass at the bottom of society that have none of the motives, none of the restraints, none of the appeals to conscience and to manliness that come with the necessity and duty of voting, are more dangerous in critical periods than they could possibly be if they were made citizens; and the remedy for the unquestionable dangers of having ignorant voters lies in educating them by all the means in our power, and not in excluding them from their rights. The safety of the State consists in the virtue, liberty, and power of its whole citizenship. Civil safety is but another term for civil rights. The old policy has been, and in Europe it still is, to attach the population to the State by as few rights as possible, and chiefly to secure him by inculcating blind submission to law, under a motive mostly of fear. But our American doctrine abhors this view, and teaches that the citizen should be attached to the State by every conceivable just expedient. It is best for the State that every single citizen should be a property-holder; should aid in determining the policy of the State; should assist in selecting its magistrates; should have open to him, and to his children, all the honors and powers which any may justly covet or seek; in short, that he be a *stockholder*, and learn to study the public weal as part of his own.

It is not wise to treat thousands of men as if they had no interest in the State, or only a subordinate one. It is not wise to create a class-feeling by giving to one man political power, and withholding it from another. The voter stands in a class above the non-voter. To say that universal suffrage is dangerous is a platitude or a sophism. Limited voting is dangerous. Voting at *all* is dangerous. Living is dangerous. Every thing is dangerous. It is dangerous to have laws, a State, and magistrates. *Not* to have them is *more* dangerous! We *must* have them and combat and overrule all the dangers! If to give half a million men the vote is perilous, how will it be to have them lying at the bottom of society in a state of savagery, looking on laws as enemies, and government as despotic, and bound to their fellows more by a sense of wrong than by common duties, interests, and ambitions?

Does any one say, "First prepare these people, and *then* give them the vote." But who will prepare them? Will the Government undertake their education? Will you assume the burthen? Will their late masters and poor white neighbors take up the cross, and seek to enlighten the blacks? In this land, a poor man without a vote is like a vagabond king hiding for his life; and a poor man with a vote is honored and courted by all. A hundred voteless black men will be consigned to contempt: but a hundred black men with a vote will be a school, and every candidate play schoolmaster to them, and expound and argue the annual questions of policy. Comprehensively viewed voting carries with it civil education.

Nothing so much prepares men for intelligent suffrage as the exercise of the right of suffrage. You cannot educate a man for liberty in any way so well as by making him use it. What would you think of teaching a child to walk without allowing him to put his foot to the ground? Would you keep a child ignorant of how to walk till he was old enough to understand the anatomy of the legs, and read that to him, and have him sit in a chair and make the motions of walking with his feet, before trying to walk? The best way of educating a child to walk is to let him walk.

It is with voting as it is with many another

art; for voting is an art of which political philosophy is the science. It is being accustomed to tools that gives aptness in their use. It is not the theory of construction that makes men good mechanics: it is practice that gives facility to their hands, and carries with it that second nature on which their skill depends; and that which is true in the mechanic arts is true in the matter of voting. There are nations in Europe that have the right of suffrage accorded to them who know not how to use it: they have a tool in their hands which they do not know what to do with; and what we need to give aptness in the use of the franchise is to accord to men the right of suffrage at an early period,— for it is using it that teaches men how to use it.

It is true, I suppose, that some are not benefited by the exercise of the right of suffrage,— such may be counted as the tare and tret of society; but the great mass of men *are* benefited by the simple use of the vote. When, for instance, in a crowd, where men are genial, there is a shouting for some object which they wish to attain, let some one call out the names of five men, proposing that these men shall be a committee to deliberate upon the subject in which they are all concerned, and report what they shall deem to be the best mode of procedure under the circumstances. Up to this time, these men were, like all the rest of the crowd, noisy, disorderly, undignified; but the moment the responsibility is put upon them of thinking for others, they are sobered. They feel differently, because more interests than simply their own are in their hands. And it is natural. You cannot undertake to think for one man, and still less for a community of men, without being conscious that there is a pressure upon you.

Now, the moment a man becomes a voter, he begins to feel that there is devolved upon him a duty that reaches beyond himself and his family, to the town where he lives, or, it may be, to the party to which he belongs. He is a thinker and an actor for others; and the moment he begins to think and act for others he is an officer of some sort, raised, dignified, and made conscious of an importance that he had not before. In the science of educating a common people, nothing is more essential than that which makes a man feel that he is personally important. One reason why the family has such a civilizing and elevating influence upon society, is because the father is the head, and has the interests of all the members to look after. And the peculiar tendency of putting the vote into a man's hand is to inspire him with conscious importance. The result at first may be slight; but in the long run it is vast. The appeals that are made to the voter's understanding, from first to last, are a great education. Consider, for instance, the discussion of public topics during the last ten years. How universal, how pervading, how intense it has been! That man must be scarcely distinguishable from the beasts of the field into whose head have not, during the last ten years, penetrated many thoughts, and doctrines, and truths, that pertain to the individual and to society.

Consider how any class of the community becomes redeemed from abuse by the power of the vote. Let a town be filled with five hundred freshly-imported Irishmen, who cannot vote, and who cares for them? How easily men curse them! How, if they interfere with men's plans, and desires, and interests, are they treated as the offscouring of the earth! But let them become citizens, and be allowed to vote, and how polite candidates are to them! How instantly their wishes are consulted! How important it is found to be that they should have their rights! The motive that actuates the candidate may be selfish and insincere; but see the result. The rights of those men become respected; and it is held that Irishmen have rights that candidates are bound to respect!

Protecting the rights of the poor is more important than protecting the rights of the rich; for the poor, being in the majority, give to the community its character. The condition of the poor is the gauge by which to measure the condition of the community. And the way to educate them, and raise them in the scale of being, is to let them vote. For he that votes, and is free to vote, is wanted by both parties. The community, therefore, become a jury, and all party speakers become advocates pleading a case before them; and they are made to sit in judgment; and their vote is their decision. And this process cannot be carried on from year to year without educating men.

So firm is my belief in this, that I would — perhaps after a little combing and washing — have our immigrants vote at once. It would be dangerous, I know, to have them vote immediately; but it would be more dangerous not to have them vote then. I would have them vote at once, first, because I think we have institutions which will bear the strain of bad voting, — for they would vote badly. It would be strange if they did not. Put me in a cabinet shop, and tell me to make a bureau, and the probabilities are that I shall spoil the lumber and the tools that are given me to work with. Put me into the trench to earn my bread by under-draining, and it is likely, not only that my earnings will amount to little or nothing, but that I shall spoil much work. Now, put an Irishman at practicing the art of self-government before he has had any experience in that art, and it will be strange if he does not spoil some tools and some work; but he is a *learner*. He is not to be compared with an old citizen till he has had an opportunity to make himself proficient in his new calling. This country is a great academy of civil government and human rights, and there come to us thousands and thousands of scholars; and the only way for us to deal with them is, to put them to the work of participating in the administration of public affairs. Their first

efforts will be bungling; but our system of government will stand the disadvantages of their want of skill while they are being educated. And very soon they will begin to vote better. You may not see the result, — fresh importations may cover it up; but you may take the lowest of them and let them vote for five years, and you will see that at the end of that time they will vote with more thought and vim, if not with more conscience, than they did in the beginning. Let them grow; let them begin to amass property; let them feel the influences of the family, and you will find that they are ameliorating in the character of their vote as well as in their social condition. And when they have been here and voted for twenty-five years, show me one of them, if you can, that does not vote as well as our own countrymen. I hold that it is better to put them to school at once, and give them to understand that it is a political school that this nation is keeping, and that we can afford to have scholars, though they spoil many writing-books in learning to write.

It is said that there are great interests of society at stake which cannot safely be trusted to such hands. I reply that this is true in some countries, and eminently untrue in our country. In countries where there are *separate political classes*, where the interests of these classes are not reciprocal, but antagonistic, — in countries, for instance, where there is a monarchy, an aristocracy, a rich middle class, or plutocracy, and a laboring class, and they are sharply demarked, having their own special prerogatives and rights, — I can understand that in such countries it is dangerous to have the vote go below a certain point. I can understand why, in England, they do not believe in universal suffrage.

But how is it in this country? We have a government that has been formed, in its laws and institutions and policy, by poor men for poor men; by exiles for the sake of those that everywhere should be in exile; by the common people for the common people. And I hold that in a country where there are no authorized classes, and where all laws and economies have been made by the great mass for the benefit of the great mass, they are not going to be disturbed by those who compose that great mass. And it is safe to submit our laws and institutions to the vote of the common people, clear down to the bottom. I will risk it. I do not fear it. I have faith, if not in the conscience, yet in the free instincts, of the common people. If there ever was a trial, a test, of a nation's stability, that has been one through which we have been passing during the last five or six years. What is the result? Is the faith of the world shaken in the safety of allowing the common people to take care of their own affairs? Is it not, on the contrary, vindicated beyond all peradventure?

I advocate, then, the giving to all men, black and white, the right of suffrage, first, because it belongs to them; second, because it is safe and beneficial; and, third, because only in this way can we have peace. We cannot have peace in any other way, because no question is ever settled that is not settled right. It is easily disturbed. If justice is refused, you may be sure that you will have agitation. You cannot hush up a principle. And as to compromising, often it is wise and expedient to compromise where *things* are concerned; but never is it wise or expedient to do it where *principles* are concerned. If you do it, you only rake up the fire, that it may break out again to-morrow. And the only way to settle a question of this character is to ask, What are the principles on which we should build? When you have settled a question thus, you have settled it right, and you are done with it. *Of the questions which came up for settlement by our fathers, those in which they touched principles were settled forever, and they never gibber or fit; but those questions where, instead of touching principles, they only touched the quicksand of expediency, have been all our lives agitating and tormenting us.* And if there was ever a people that ought to have learned that to touch the ground of principle is safe, and that to come short of that is unsafe, we are that people. So let us not commit another mistake.

I, then, advocate suffrage for the black people, because I believe they have given evidence that they will make a good use of it. They are intelligent enough to do it.

I advocate it, too, because they have earned and deserved this boon, even if it were not their right. I allude to their singularly good conduct in the trying situations of the last five years; to the wonderful sagacity which has marked them during all that time; and to their invariable love and tender care shown to our soldiers. I do not believe there is a soldier that, escaping from Southern captivity, has been ministered to, night and day, by the blacks, has had his wounds dressed by them, and has in no case been betrayed by them; I do not believe your son, who escaped through the fidelity of these people; I do not believe any soldier who, in the midst of suffering and peril, has been succored and relieved by them, would, if the question were to come up as to whether the negro should be permitted to vote, or be denied the right of voting, go for denying that right.

Then, for their heroic military services, I think the blacks have deserved the right of suffrage. And here let me tell you what was Gen. Grant's testimony about colored soldiers. Said Gen. Grant, "For picket duty, for guard duty, for the march, and for assault, the colored soldiers are surpassed by none in the world, and equalled by few." "Well, then, General," it was asked, "what do they lack? They seem to have every qualification that a soldier requires." Gen. Grant replied, "They may not have the power to endure continuous fighting like that of the forty-five days' struggle from

the Wilderness to the James. This has not yet been proved; but it may turn out that they possess this element also."

They are more faithful than white soldiers in guard duty. The bread of the army under the bayonet of the black man is safer than under the bayonet of the white man. And it is not long to be disguised or disputed that these men make as good soldiers as soldiers need be. And when, coming from the plantation, without having had the advantages of education, they are able to mantain themselves by the side of white men that have been brought up in the common schools, how much do they deserve of praise! Let Gen. Sherman be heard: "Though I think the white race a superior one, and that it ought to rule this continent for itself, yet if you admit the negro to this struggle for any purpose, he has a right to stay in for all, and when the fight is over, the hand that drops the musket cannot be denied the ballot."

Moreover, they deserve the right of suffrage by reason of their unswerving fidelity to the Union; and on this ground I demand that they should be recognized as citizens. Talk of their unfitness to hold the destiny of the nation, when, in fifteen States, while the white population have proved recreant to the Government, they have remained constant in their adherence to it! While fifteen millions of white men betrayed their trust, and brought eternal infamy upon their history, these four million blacks, though subjected to severe trial, both of life and limb, were faithful to law, to Union, to the Constitution, to liberty, to the old flag, and all that that flag symbolizes; and in the name of fidelity, I demand that they who have done so much for this nation shall not be denied the right of citizenship in it.

I demand it on one ground more: I demand it for the sake of the white Union men in the South. For, ere long, when again the rebellious States are, by the flash of the sword, wheeled into line; when again things resume their old way, the white men that have been faithful to the Union in those States will be in a sad condition. When local affairs again pass into the hands of the citizens there, those men, who are but a handful, if left by themselves, will be ground as between an upper and lower millstone. But if the slaves are allowed to vote, they and the white Union men will be more than a match for their adversaries. And I demand that you shall not sacrifice the minority of white men in the South, by withholding the vote from these their natural allies, that, if allowed to exercise the rights of citizenship, will always go with them.

I know it is said, "This will make the black man equal to the white." Well, if God made him equal to the white, you cannot help yourselves. If God did not make him equal to the white, then I do not. Whatever God made him capable of becoming, let him become. That is all I ask. I do not express any opinion as to whether he is or is not equal to the white. I am willing to take my chance with him. Are you willing to do the same, or, are you afraid he will outrun you in a fair race?

It is said, too, "If he may vote, then he may be voted for, and may hold office." Why not, if anybody wants to vote for him, and wants to put him in office? Do you suppose that this is the particular danger? Do you suppose that, the moment black men are allowed to vote and to be voted for, every body will insist on having them made officers? One would think, to hear men talk, that, if the way was opened for it, the whole community would rise up and fill every public station with a colored man! Why, do not you know that such is the cloud of prejudice against the negro, that such a thing as the election to office of a colored man would be next to impossible? If it ever did take place, it would be the highest conceivable testimony of the man's fitness for the position to which he was raised. What impertinent objections are these!

But, it is said, "If you take such steps as these, and give citizenship to the blacks, then all distinction will be abolished, and miscegenation will be the result." It seems to me that the whites are an excellent stock in their way and kind, and that the blacks are an excellent stock in their way and kind; and I am not myself in favor of mingling them. There are a great many that for years have insisted upon doing it. All that I have to say is, if it *must* be done, let it be done lawfully, by marriage, and not by adultery. That is all I insist upon. If any man *will* have a black woman for a companion, there ought not to be any law to prevent him, but he should *marry* her. I do not undertake to say that the mingling of these races will deteriorate one or the other. I leave that as a question for physiologists, who, I think, have not facts enough to settle it. The South have had the imprudence to taunt us with that as a doctrine which we abhor in them, and which they not only hold as a doctrine, but put into practice. This is an objection the most unwarranted and unwarrantable.

I am in favor of two laws: first, that, if a man does not wish to marry a black woman, nothing shall compel him to; and, second, that, if a man wants to marry a black woman, nothing shall hinder him! It seems to me that under such laws this question will be perfectly safe.

I know not that it is necessary for me to go further into objections that are frivolous in the light of the great doctrines of the American people.

I stand, to-night, to plead for the rights of men; and I plead for them all the more willingly because they are the rights of men that are unable to plead for their own rights. They are emerging from bondage. I thank God, as for the best gift of my life, that I have lived to see the day when the chain is broken, and the shackle has fallen, and the African has gone free. Now, if my life has been spared to see that despised creature of the plantation in-

ducted into the fullness of his right as a citizen, religiously taught, and made industrious by the ownership of land, and by the application of those motives that make us industrious; if I have lived to see that nation born in a day, I can say, with Simeon, "Now, Lord, let thy servant depart in peace; for mine eyes have seen thy salvation."

And all this, not because it is a negro, but because it is a *man*. It is not because of his color, but simply because of that which is in him in common with you and me. It is because he came from God, and goes to God again. It is because he was remembered in Gethsemane, and his sins were washed away upon Calvary. I accept him as my brother, because Christ is his Redeemer and mine, and God is his Father and mine; he is my blood kindred. And I assert for him, in the name of Christianity, in the name of liberty, and in the name of civilization, the rights that God gave him, that men have taken away from him, and that it is your privilege to restore to him.

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# PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S POLICY:

## AS FORESHADOWED IN A SPEECH AT NASHVILLE, TENN., UPON HIS NOMINATION FOR THE VICE-PRESIDENCY.

*From the New-York Herald Correspondence.*

THE brief announcement contained in this morning's papers, that Andrew Johnson had been nominated on the Republican ticket with Mr. Lincoln, created no surprise and but little remark in this city. It was generally considered a foregone conclusion that the ticket would embrace the name of Governor Johnson, it being pretty generally known that great efforts had been and were being made by his friends to secure him the nomination. The announcement of his success, therefore, was received as a matter of course, and no particular demonstration was made in public until this evening.

Samuel Carter, the proprietor of the Saint Cloud Hotel, has always been a staunch Union man. He says that during the morning he was revolving in his brain the names of the true, staunch, loyal men of Tennessee whom he knew. The roll summed up nineteen names; and out of those nineteen good and holy men one has been chosen by the Baltimore Convention to be its candidate for Vice President. Carter calculated that he had only missed the nomination by eighteen, and that it became his duty to celebrate the occasion. So, when night approached, the hotel was illuminated, a brass band was obtained, a crowd gathered around, and Governor Johnson introduced to it. The usual welcome of three cheers and a few chords from the band welcomed him as he arose and began what, under all the circumstances, I supposed would be a ten minutes' speech of thanks for the honor and compliment; but during the two hours in which he occupied the stand, he gave vent to a letter of acceptance of the nomination which has several points of interest, and which I endeavor to give you from meagre notes. I shall not attempt to give you the stereotyped introduction, apologies, and conclusion, but the main points of his speech.

### THE MORAL OF LINCOLN'S RENOMINATION.

The demonstration which has been made to-night, Governor Johnson was pleased to think, was not made in his behalf, but was an acknowledgment on the part of those present of their devotion to the Government, the country, and the cause in which every true patriot was engaged,—the maintenance of the principles of liberty. This war is a great struggle for the existence of free government, *and in the renomination of the man who had for three years guided the bark of State, the Convention had declared, not only to the people of the United States, but to all nations of the earth, that we are determined to carry out and maintain the principles of free government.*

THE PRINCIPLES INVOLVED IN HIS OWN NOMINATION.

As for his own humble self, Governor Johnson declared that there was also a principle declared, and then gave us the substance of what you have had from Parson Brownlow, in the Convention, regarding the right of secession. Johnson declared that it was an important principle, and one not to be disregarded. *The representatives of all the States in that Convention had declared in his nomination that they did not recognize that one State could withdraw or secede from the United States. In other words—which the Governor's modesty forbade him to declare—he represented that principle, and that it had secured him the nomination. He had held that doctrine from the first, and now the nation's representatives had, in convention assembled, declared with him that no State could secede*, and, in going into a State which had rebelled to select a candidate for the Vice Presidency, had asserted that Tennessee never had been out of the Union, and had never a right to secede. They had acted as the representatives not of States, but of the whole Government, and recognized no right of a part to dismember the whole.

HE ACCEPTS THE NOMINATION.

So far as he was concerned, he declared he had not sought the honor which had just been conferred upon him. No man could honestly say that Andrew Johnson had ever electioneered with him to obtain his influence to secure power and place. On the contrary, he had felt that he had higher duties to perform than those of a mere aspirant for office. And having been thus conferred, unsought and unasked, he appreciated the honor that much higher; "and," he added, raising his voice, "I shall not decline it. In accepting, come weal or come woe, success or defeat, *I shall stand on the principles I here enunciate, let the consequences for good or evil be what they may.*"

SOUTHERN ARISTOCRACY.

He had no doubt that there were thousands in the State, and no doubt many in the crowd that listened, who had a sovereign contempt for him, but while scorning their contempt he felt his superiority to them. He had always understood them—this aristocracy based on slave labor. There also existed in the State another class whose respect he commanded, and he was proud to say that that class, antagonistic to the aristocracy, were for a free government, in which merit, not wealth, would constitute worth. *A large proportion of one of the elements of the Rebellion were the aristocrats*, who were opposed to a government in which they were ruled by a man who has risen from among the humble classes of the people. A distinguished Georgian had told him in Washington, after the election of Mr. Lincoln, and just before his inauguration, that the people of Georgia would not submit to be governed by a man who had risen from the ranks. It was one of the principal objections of the people of the South to Mr. Lincoln. What would they do now, when they had to take two rulers who had risen from the ranks. *This aristocracy was antagonistic to the principles of free democratic government, and the time had come when it had to give up the ghost.* After "pitching in" generally to military commanders who had protected rebel property, he returned to the rebellious aristocracy, and announced, in the cold, impressive manner of a judge delivering sentence, that *the time had come when this rebellious element of aristocracy must be punished. The time had come when their lands must be confiscated.* The day when they could talk of their three and four thousand acres of land, tilled by their hundreds of negroes, was past, and the hour for the division of these rich lands among the energetic and laboring masses was at hand. The field was to be thrown open, and he now invited the energetic and industrious of the North to come and occupy it, and apply here the same skill and industry which had made the North so rich. *He was for putting down the aristocracy and dividing out their possessions among the worthier laborers of any and all colors.*

SLAVERY.

It was a natural transposition to slavery and the status of the negro in this State. He alluded to slavery as a discordant element in the midst of the people. He knew many men in the State, and perhaps some in the crowd, who were in favor of continuing the system of negro slavery. "*I tell you*," he exclaimed, "*and I tell them, that, so far as slavery is concerned, it is dead;* and I want to say to you, too, that it was not murdered by me. I fought the question in the Senate, where it ought to have been fought. Go to my speeches, and read there how I pictured this desolation and these horrors which have come to pass. I admonished against the taking the question out of Congress and the Union. My advice was disregarded, and that of better men. They disregarded all sage advice, and dared to raise their traitorous and sacrilegious hands against liberty in order to save slavery. As they have murdered slavery in trying to destroy liberty, let them bury it. Do not call on me for help, 'nor shake your gory locks at me. Thou canst not say I did it.'"

THE STATUS OF THE SLAVE.

Addressing himself to any black men who might be within the reach of his voice, he then told them that *they were set loose and free.* They had been admitted into the great field of competition, where industry and energy alone thrived; and advised them that, if they were not industrious and economical, they would have to give way to those of such habits, and that they would be driven from the field, if they did not work. "*Freedom*," he said, "*means liberty to work, and then to enjoy the fruits and products*

*of your labor.* This is the philosophy of it. *Let all men have a fair start and an equal chance in the race of life, and let merit be rewarded without regard to color.*" He was for cutting the negro loose; and he believed that in freeing the negro we were emancipating the poor white man from a no less degrading slavery to the aristocracy, which he again alluded to as "this infernal and damnable aristocracy," and which he declared himself in favor of breaking up. "And in thus freeing the slave, thereby committing a great right, you destroy aristocracy, and thus abolish a great wrong."

RESTORATION OF THE STATE.

Another easy step to this subject. The Governor, with much vehemence of manner, and in a tone of voice and with a peculiar gesture with his right forefinger, which serves to, as it were, italicise his words and to attract the attention of his audience, opened by *declaring that in the re-organization of the State as a member of the Union, with all her former rights and privileges, he was heartily in favor of discarding the discordant and incongruous element of slavery,* — that curse which had brought war and misery upon the land, which had caused the shedding of so much innocent blood, and made so many widows and orphans. *He advised the people now to leave slavery out.* He graphically pictured the condition of the State, resulting from the war, and again urged them, in re-organizing the State, to leave slavery out of the code of its regenerated laws.

He then asked who was to do this work of restoration. *Certainly not the rebels who had fought, or those who had given aid and influence to, the rebel cause.* Such men should not control the affairs of State, or else all the efforts nad been made in vain—all our victories had been even in vain, and all our privations and sufferings had been endured in vain and were unavailing. *He then announced it as his feeling and opinion, that, if there are not more than five thousand men in Tennessee who have been and are loyal to the country, to justice, and to the principle of freedom, that that five thousand should control absolutely and wholly the affairs of the State.* The traitor who had rebelled ceased to be a citizen, and was an enemy. He alluded to the naturalization laws, and declared that he was in favor of subjecting the traitor to a severer test than the foreigner, and, indeed, the severest test. He objects to Mr. Lincoln's amnesty oath, and says those who have taken it are not to be trusted. *He wanted to see the traitors punished and their leaders hung; and the day was not far distant when retribution would be demanded, and treason would be odious.* It must be made so.

A WARNING TO NAPOLEON.

Governor Johnson also gave vent to a few words of warning to the French Emperor, which, if uttered by the principal on the ticket, would have raised a greater excitement in the French capital than the resolution in Congress lately did. But coming from one of some three or four candidates for the same office, the language of "Andy" will not do more than make "Nap" quake in his boots. *He declared himself in favor of the Monroe doctrine throughout; and prophesied that the day was not far distant when, with the Rebellion crushed, we should say to Napoleon that he could not establish a monarchy in Mexico.* This part of his speech was received with great applause, and the crowd were evidently opposed to Maximillian and absolute monarchy on this continent.

In concluding, the Governor declared that we were engaged at this time in testing the first great principle of free government, and deciding for the benefit of the nations looking on whether man was capable of self-government. He held, with Jefferson, that the Government was made for the people, not the people for the Government, *and that the people could change the Constitution to suit their advancement in the cause of universal freedom.* He then urged all to sustain the Government in the great revolution they were now engaged in, until the great step now being taken was completed. There could be no conservative, no middle ground, where only two great principles opposed each other. *Every man was now for or against the Government;* and he called on all true patriots to sustain the Government, the administration, and the army.

# THE LESSON OF PRESIDENT LINCOLN'S DEATH:

## A SPEECH OF WENDELL PHILLIPS,

***At the Tremont Temple, on Sunday Evening, April 23, 1865.***

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THESE are sober days. The judgments of God have found us out. Years gone by chastised us with whips; these chastise us with scorpions. Thirty years ago, how strong our mountain stood, laughing prosperity on all its sides! None heeded the fire and gloom which slumbered below. It was nothing that a giant sin gagged our pulpits; that its mobs ruled our streets, burnt men at the stake for their opinions, and hunted them like wild beasts for their humanity. It was nothing, that, in the lonely quiet of the plantation, there fell on the unpitied person of the slave every torture which hellish ingenuity could devise. It was nothing that as husband and father, mother and child, the negro drained to its dregs all the bitterness that could be pressed into his cup; that, torn with whip and dogs, starved, hunted, tortured, racked, he cried, "How long! O Lord, how long!" In vain did a thousand witnesses crowd our highways, telling to the world the horrors of this prison-house. None stopped to consider, none believed. Trade turned away its deaf ear; the Church gazed on them with stony brow; Letters passed by with mocking tongue. But what the world would not look at, God has set to-day in a light so ghastly bright, that it almost dazzles us blind. What the world refused to believe, God has written all over the face of the continent, with the sword's point, in the blood of our best and most beloved. We believe the agony of the slave's hovel, the mother, and the husband, when it takes its seat at our board. We realize the barbarism that crushed him in the sickening and brutal use of the relics of Bull Run, in the torture and starvation of Libby Prison, where idiocy was mercy, and death was God's best blessing; and now, still more bitterly, we realize it in the coward spite which strikes an unarmed man, unwarned, behind his back; in the assassin fingers which dabble with bloody knite at the throats of old men on sick pillows. O, God! let this lesson be enough! Spare us any more such costly teaching!

This deed is but the result, and fair representative, of the system in whose defence it was done. No matter whether it was previously approved at Richmond, or whether the assassin, if he reaches the confederates, be received with all honor, as the wretch Brooks was, and as this bloodier wretch will surely be, wherever rebels are not dumb with fear of our cannon. No matter for all this. God shows this terrible act to teach the nation, in unmistakable terms, the terrible foe with which it has to deal. But for this fiendish spirit, North and South, which holds up the rebellion, the assassin had never either wished or dared such a deed. This lurid flash only shows us how black and wide the cloud from which it sprung.

And what of him in whose precious blood this momentous lesson is writ? He sleeps in the blessings of the poor, whose fetters God commissioned him to break. Give prayers and tears to the desolate widow and the fatherless; but count him blessed far above the crowd of his fellow-men. [Fervent cries of "Amen!"] He was permitted himself to deal the last staggering blow which sent rebellion reeling to its grave; and then, holding his darling boy by the hand, to walk the streets of its surrendered capital, while his ears drank in praise and thanksgiving which bore his name to the throne of God in every form piety and gratitude could invent; and finally, to seal the sure triumph of the cause he loved with his own blood. He caught the first notes of the coming jubilee, and heard his own name in every one. Who among living men may not envy him? Suppose that, when a boy, as he floated on the slow current of the Mississippi, idly gazing at the slave upon its banks, some angel had lifted the curtain, and shown him, that, in the prime of his manhood, he should see this proud empire rocked to its foundation in the effort to break those chains; should himself marshal the hosts of the Almighty in the grandest and holiest war that Christendom ever knew, and deal, with half-reluctant hand, that thunderbolt of justice which would smite the foul system to the dust; then die, leaving a name immortal in the sturdy pride of our race and the undying gratitude of another, — would any credulity, however sanguine, any enthusiasm, however fervid, have enabled him to believe it? Fortunate man! He has lived to do it! [Applause.] God has graciously withheld him from any fatal misstep in the great advance, and withdrawn him at the moment when his star touched its

zenith, and the nation needed a sterner hand for the work God gives it to do.

No matter now, that, unable to lead and form the nation, he was contented to be only its representative and mouthpiece; no matter, that, with prejudices hanging about him, he groped his way very slowly and sometimes reluctantly forward; let us remember how patient he was of contradiction, how little obstinate in opinion, how willing, like Lord Bacon, "to light his torch at every man's candle." With the least possible personal hatred; with too little sectional bitterness, often forgetting justice in mercy; tender-hearted to any misery his own eyes saw; and in any deed which needed his actual sanction, if his sympathy had limits, recollect he was human, and that he welcomed light more than most men, was more honest than his fellows, and with a truth to his own convictions such as few politicians achieve. With all his shortcomings, we point proudly to him as the natural growth of democratic institutions. [Applause.] Coming time will put him in that galaxy of Americans which makes our history the day-star of the nations, — Washington, Hamilton, Franklin, Jefferson and Jay. History will add his name to the bright list, with a more loving claim on our gratitude than either of them. No one of those was called to die for his cause. For him, when the nation needed to be raised to its last dread duty, we were prepared for it by the baptism of his blood.

What shall we say as to the punishment of rebels? The air is thick with threats of vengeance. I admire the motive which prompts these; but let us remember, no cause, however infamous, was ever crushed by punishing its advocates and abettors. All history proves this. There is no class of men base and coward enough, no matter what their views and purpose, to make the policy of vengeance successful. In bad causes, as well as good, it is still true that "the blood of the martyrs is the seed of the Church." We cannot prevail against this principle of human nature. And, again, with regard to the dozen chief rebels, it will never be a practical question whether we shall hang them. Those not now in Europe will soon be there. Indeed, after paroling the bloodiest and guiltiest of all, Robert Lee [loud applause], there would be little fitness in hanging any lesser wretch.

The only punishment which ever crushes a cause is that which its leaders necessarily suffer in consequence of the new order of things made necessary to prevent the recurrence of their sin. It was not the blood of two peers and thirty commoners, which England shed after the rebellion of 1715, or that of five peers and twenty commoners, after the rising of 1745, which crushed the House of Stuart. Though the fight had lasted only a few months, those blocks and gibbets gave Charles his only chance to recover. But the confiscated lands of his adherents, and the new political arrangement of the Highlands, — just, and recognized as such, because necessary, — these quenched his star forever.

Our Rebellion has lasted four years. Government has exchanged prisoners and acknowledged its belligerent rights. After that, gibbets are out of the question. A thousand men rule the Rebellion, — are the Rebellion. A thousand men! We cannot hang them all. We cannot hang men in regiments. What, cover the continent with gibbets! We cannot sicken the nineteenth century with such a sight. It would sink our civilization to the level of Southern barbarism. It would forfeit our very right to supersede the Southern system, which right is based on ours being better than theirs. To make its corner-stone the gibbet would degrade us to the level of Davis and Lee. The structure of Government which bore the earthquake shock of 1861 with hardly a jar, and which now bears the assassination of its Chief Magistrate, in this crisis of civil war, with even less disturbance, needs, for its safety, no such policy of vengeance; its serene strength needs to use only so much severity as will fully guarantee security for the future.

Banish every one of these thousand rebel leaders, — every one of them, on pain of death if they ever return! [Loud applause.] Confiscate every dollar and acre they own. [Applause.] These steps the world and their followers will see are necessary to kill the seeds of *caste*, dangerous State rights and secession. [Applause.] Banish Lee with the rest. [Applause.] No Government should ask of the South which he has wasted and the North which he has murdered such superabundant Christian patience as to tolerate in our streets the presence of a wretch whose hand upheld Libby Prison and Andersonville, and whose soul is black with sixty-four thousand deaths of prisoners by starvation and torture.

What of our new President? His whole life is a pledge that he knows and hates thoroughly that *caste* which is the Gibraltar of secession. *Caste*, mailed in State rights, seized slavery as its weapon to smite down the Union. Said Jackson, in 1833; "Slavery will be the next *pretext* for rebellion." PRETEXT! That pretext and weapon we wrench from the rebel hands the moment we pass the anti-slavery amendment to the Constitution. Now kill *caste*, the foe who wields it. Andy Johnson is our natural leader for this. His life has been pledged to it. He put on his spurs with this vow of knighthood. He sees that confiscation, land placed in the hands of the *masses*, is the means to kill this foe.

Land and the ballot are the true foundations of all Governments. Intrust them wherever loyalty exists, to all those, black and white, who have upheld the flag. [Applause.] Reconstruct no State without giving to every loyal man in it the ballot. I scout all limitations of knowledge, property or race. [Applause.] Universal suffrage for me. That was the Revolutionary model. Every freeman

voted, black or white, whether he could read or not. My rule is, any citizen liable to be hanged for crime is entitled to vote for rulers. The ballot insures the school.

Mr. Johnson has not yet uttered a word which shows that he sees the need of negro suffrage to guarantee the Union. The best thing he has said on this point, showing a mind open to light, is thus reported by one of the most intelligent men in the country, the Baltimore correspondent of the Boston *Commonwealth*: —.

"The Vice-President was holding forth very eloquently in front of Admiral Lee's dwelling, just in front of the War-Office in Washington. He said he was willing to send every negro in the country to Africa to save the Union. Nay, he was willing to cut Africa loose from Asia, and sink the whole black race ten thousand fathoms deep to effect this object. A loud voice sang out in the crowd, 'Let the negro stay where he is, governor, and give him the ballot, and the Union will be safe forever!' 'And I am ready to do that, too!' [loud applause] shouted the governor, with intense energy, whereat he got three times three for the noble sentiment. I witnessed this scene, and was pleased to hear our Vice-President take this high ground, for up to this point must the nation quickly advance, or there will be no peace, no rest, no prosperity, no blessing, for our suffering and distracted country."

The need of giving the negro a ballot is what we must press on the President's attention. Beware the mistake which fastened McClellan on us, running too fast to indorse a man while untried, determined to manufacture a hero and leader at any rate. The President tells us that he waits to announce his policy till events call for it, — a wise, timely, and statesman-like course. Let us imitate it. Assure him in return that the government shall have our support like good citizens. But remind him that we will tell him what we think of his policy when we learn what it is. He says, "Wait: I shall punish; I shall confiscate. What more I shall do, you will know when I do it."

Let us reply: "Good! So far, good! Banish the rebels. See to it that, beyond all mistake, you strip them of all possibility of doing harm. But see to it also that before you admit a single State to the Union, you oblige it to give every loyal man in it the ballot, — the ballot, which secures education; the ballot, which begets character where it lodges responsibility; the ballot, having which, no class need fear injustice or contempt; the ballot, which puts the helm of the Union into the hands of those who love and have upheld it. Land, — where every man's title-deed, based on confiscation, is the bond which ties his interest to the Union; ballot, — the weapon which enables him to defend his property and the Union. These are the motives for the white man: the negro needs no motive but his instinct and heart. Give him the bullet and ballot, he needs them; and while he holds them the Union is safe. To reconstruct now without giving the negro the ballot would be a greater blunder, and, considering our better light, a greater sin than our fathers committed in 1789; and we should have no right to expect from it any less disastrous results."

This is the lesson God teaches us in the blood of Lincoln. Like Egypt, we are made to read our lesson in the blood of our first-born, and the seats of our princes left empty. We bury all false magnanimity in this fresh grave, writing over it the maxim of the coming four years: "Treason is the greatest of crimes, and not a mere difference of opinion." That is the motto of our leader to-day, — that the warning this atrocious crime sounds throughout the land. Let us heed it, and need no more such costly teaching. [Loud applause.]